

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-32 (canceled).

Claim 33 (new). A high-protein baked food product, comprising at least:

(a) at least 15% by weight on a dry weight basis based on the food product as a whole of a protein component;

(b) an oil or fat component; and

(c) a saccharide component;

wherein said high-protein baked food product is obtainable by the steps of:

(i) finely grinding, in a refiner, a first material mixture comprising a protein, a saccharide and an oil or fat selected from the group consisting of rape seed oil, soybean oil, cacao oil, corn oil, coconut oil, palm oil, safflower oil, cotton seed oil, sesame oil, olive oil, rice oil, butter, beef tallow, margarine, shortening and a combination thereof;

(ii) stirring the ground mixture from step (i) while heating under conditions sufficient to form a creamy primary product, said heating being conducted at 40 to 60°C;

(iii) mixing the creamy primary product with a secondary material mixture provided separately from the primary product to form a further mixture, said separately provided secondary material mixture comprising at least an oil or fat fraction and a saccharide fraction; and

(iv) baking the further mixture.

Claim 34 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein said protein is a whey protein isolate (WPI).

Claim 35 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein the high-protein baked food product has an amino acid score based on an adult amino acid scoring pattern of 100.

Claim 36 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein said saccharide is a sugar alcohol.

Claim 37 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 36, wherein said sugar alcohol is selected from the group consisting of xylitol, sorbitol, and a mixture thereof.

Claim 38 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, which comprises a further component selected from the group consisting of a calcium component, an iron component, a vitamin and a dietary fiber.

Claim 39 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, further comprising a calcium component or an iron component or both.

Claim 40 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33 wherein, in a stress curve obtained by applying to the baked food product a tensipressor with a plunger having a diameter of 5 mm, the maximum stress value is not more than 15 N.

Claim 41 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein, upon application of a tensipressor to the high-protein baked food product under conditions of plunger diameter 5 mm and sample table travel speed 60 mm/min, a chew work of the food product, determined as a plunger work in a period between the start of contact of the food product with the plunger and 0.5 sec after the start of contact of the food product with the plunger, is not more than 2.0×10^{-3} J.

Claim 42 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, which is a cookie or a biscuit.

Claim 43 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein said protein component is contained in an amount of 18 to 29% by weight on a dry weight basis of the food product as a whole.

Claim 44 (new). The high-protein baked food product according to claim 33, wherein the oil or fat component is present in an amount of 32 to 39% by weight on a dry weight basis of the food product as a whole.

Claim 45 (new). A process for producing a high-protein baked food product, comprising at least (a) a protein component in an amount of at least 15% by weight on a dry weight basis of the food product as a whole, (b) an oil or fat component; and (c) a saccharide component, said process comprising the steps of:

(i) finely grinding in a refiner a first material mixture comprising a protein, a saccharide and an oil or fat selected from the group consisting of rape seed oil, soybean oil, cacao oil, corn oil, coconut oil, palm oil, safflower oil, cotton seed oil, sesame oil, olive oil, rice oil, butter, beef tallow, margarine, shortening and a combination thereof;

(ii) stirring the mixture with heating sufficient to form a creamy primary product, said heating being conducted at 40 to 60°C;

(iii) providing, separately from said primary product, a secondary material

mixture comprising at least an oil or fat fraction and a saccharide fraction;

(iv) mixing the primary product with the second material mixture to form a further mixture; and

(v) baking the further mixture to form the high-protein baked food product.

Claim 46 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein said oil or fat is present in an amount of 27 to 35% by weight of the first material mixture

Claim 47 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein the second material mixture is prepared by separately stirring the oil or fat fraction, adding the saccharide fraction to the separately stirred oil or fat fraction and further stirring

Claim 48 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein the mixing of the primary product with the second material mixture is carried out by mixing the second material mixture with the primary product after the primary product has been heated and melted.

Claim 49 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein said protein is a whey protein isolate (WPI).

Claim 50 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein said saccharide is a sugar alcohol.

Claim 51 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein, in a stress curve obtained by applying to the baked food product a tensile pressor with a plunger having a diameter of 5 mm, the maximum stress value is not more than 15 N.

Claim 52 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein said protein component is contained in an amount of 18 to 29% by weight on a dry weight basis of the food product as a whole.

Claim 53 (new). The process according to claim 45, wherein said oil or fat component is present in an amount of 32 to 39% by weight on a dry weight basis of the food product as a whole.

Claim 54 (new). A process for enhancing softness or chewability of a high-protein baked food product comprising at least 15% by weight of protein on a dry weight basis based on a total weight of the baked food product, the process comprising the steps of:

(i) providing first and second material mixtures, (a) the first material mixture comprising a protein component, a first fraction of a saccharide component and a first fraction of an oil or fat component, wherein the oil or fat component is selected from the group consisting of rape seed oil, soybean oil, cacao oil, corn oil, coconut oil, palm oil, safflower oil, cotton seed oil, sesame oil, olive oil, rice oil, butter, beef tallow, margarine, shortening and a combination thereof; and (b) the second

material mixture comprising at least a second fraction of the oil or fat component and a second fraction of the saccharide component;

(ii) finely grinding in a refiner the protein component, the first fraction of the oil or fat component and the first fraction of the saccharide component of the first material mixture;

(iii) stirring the finely ground mixture with heating sufficient to form a creamy primary product, said heating being conducted at between 40 to 60°C;

(iv) mixing the creamy primary product with the second material mixture, and

(v) baking the mixture from step (iv) to form the high-protein baked food product such that the high-protein baked food product comprises at least 15% by weight of protein and has a softness or chewability that is enhanced as compared with a softness or chewability of the high-protein baked food product if prepared with the same components but without the steps of forming the creamy primary product and mixing the creamy primary product with the second material mixture before baking.

Claim 55 (new). A high-protein baked food product prepared by the process according to claim 54.

Claim 56 (new). The process according to claim 54, wherein step (iii) comprises adding another fraction of the oil or fat component during the stirring.

Claim 57 (new). The process according to claim 54, wherein the first material mixture is provided in step (i) by providing the protein component, the first fraction of the oil or fat component and the first fraction of the saccharide component and then mixing the protein component, the first fraction of the oil or fat component and the first fraction of the saccharide component.